

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STOCKH 03850 311120Z

17 15

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 928

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR SW

SUBJECT: SWEDISH FOREIGN MINISTER RESIGNS

REF: STOCKHOLM 3780

1. AT SPECIAL KING-IN-COUNCIL MEETING OCT 30 GOVERNMENT
ACCEPTED RESIGNATION OF FORNMINSTER WICKMAN AND DIRECTED
PRIMIN PALME TO HOLD PORTFOLIO AS TEMPORARY FORNMINISTER.

IN TWO TO THREE WEEKS PALME IS EXPECTED TO NAME NEW
FORNMINISTER AS PART OF A POSSIBLY WIDE-RANGING CABINET

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RESHUFFLE.

2. WICKMAN WILL BE ELECTED TO BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF RIKSBANK (CENTRAL BANK) OCT 31--A NECESSARY STEP TO HIS ELECTION AS HEAD OF RIKSBANK VICE PER ASBRINK, WHO HAS RESIGNED. WELL-INFORMED NEWSPAPER DAGENS NYHETER PROFESSES TO KNOW THAT SVEN ANDERSSON NOW DEFENSE MINISTER, WILL SUCCEED WICKMAN AT FOREIGN MINISTRY. WACHTMEISTER, DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS, TOLD CHARGE OCT 30 HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER PALME HAD SETTLED ON A SUCCESSOR BUT THOUGHT ANDERSSON WAS "LIKELY CHOICE."

3. IN POST-RESIGNATION INTERVIEW WICKMAN SAID THAT HE WAS VERY PLEASED TO GET THE BANK JOB WHICH HE HAD BEEN HOPING TO GET FOR A LONG TIME, AND HE SEEMED GENUINELY PLEASED TO GET RID OF THE ONEROUS WORKING SCHEDULE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. HE SAID THAT GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT OF HIS TENURE WAS WORKING OUT RELATIONS WITH EC, AND GREATEST SATISFACTION WAS ENDING OF COLD WAR. ON US-SWEDISH RELATIONS HE SAID ONE SHOULDN'T OVERDRAMATIZE THINGS AND THAT IN GENERAL RELATIONS ARE GOOD. IT IS ABSURD, HE SAID, THAT WE DON'T HAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

COMMENT: FORNMINISTRY PEOPLE HEAVED MIGHTY SIGN OF RELIEF AT WICKMAN RESIGNATION. NEVER A DOMINATING FIGURE IN THE MINISTRY, WICKMAN HAS BEEN A KNOWN SHORT-TIMER FOR PAST SIX MONTHS AND HAS EXERCISED PROGRESSIVELY LESS CONTROL OF MINISTRY AS TIME PASSED. INSIDERS SAY THAT IN LEADERSHIP VACUUM MINISTRY DIVIDED INTO TWO CAMPS--ONE HEADED BY STATE SECRETARY SVERKER ASTROM AND OTHER LED BY KAI BJORK, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC POLITICIAN WHO IS MEMBER OF RIKSDAG AND AT SAME TIME COUNSELOR (NO. 3 MAN) IN FORNMINISTRY. CQUENCE HAS OFTEN BEEN INABILITY OF MINISTRY TO CONTROL POLICY. MOST NOTABLE EXAMPLE, ACCORDING TO CONFIDENTIAL MINISTRY SOURCE, IS GOS RESPONSE TO CHILE COUP. SOURCE SAID THAT AMBASSADOR EDELSTAM, A WILLFUL PERSONALITY, HAS MADE SWEDISH POLICY IN CHILE WITHOUT REFERENCE TO STOCKHOLM. DECISIONS TO GRANT ASYLUM TO ALLENDE PARTISANS AND TO REPRESENT CUBAN INTERESTS IN SANTIAGO, FOR EXAMPLE, WERE EDELSTAM FAITS ACCOMPLIS. MINISTRY SOURCE SAID THIS AND OTHER LESS SPECTACULAR EXAMPLES OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 STOCKH 03850 311120Z

"ANARCHY" SERIOUSLY DAMAGED MORALE OF MINISTRY PROFESSIONALS IN RECENT MONTHS. SOURCE SAID "EVERYONE" HOPES FOR A STRONG PERSONALITY AS NEW MINISTER AND SAID ANDERSSON, A PRESTIGIOUS SENIOR MEMBER OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC ESTABLISHMENT, WOULD FILL THE BILL.
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